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CALL FOR PAPERS

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Modernism and Rurality: Mapping the State of Research.

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Rurality appears as an emerging frame of reference in European discourses around the built environment. While modern architecture has sought, throughout its development, to find inspiration in vernacular and rural architecture, as a presumed source of authentic and rational architectural expression, it is in the cities that this movement identified its preferred field of operations. Similarly goes with the development of modernist urban planning and design, where the importation of countryside's environmental and social qualities to the urban sphere was meant to reform and cure the ill large industrial cities. Nowadays, the architectural and urban design and planning agenda is riding the wave of urban agriculture, but also questioning the longstanding lack of interest for rural areas, as testified by the *AlterRurality* series of meetings (2012 - ongoing) and by the experience of the *Espace rural et projet spatial* network (ERPS: Rural space & spatial design).

This session aims to address, from a historical perspective, the relation between, on one side, architecture and the related disciplines, and on the other side, agriculture and rurality at large. In fact, modernist design and planning *in and for* the countryside is an overlooked topic in architectural history, and often stand as an underestimated cultural heritage. An emerging stream of scholarship has approached the topic from different perspectives: focusing on stylistic issues, to stress the tension between modernist and vernacular languages (Lejeune & Sabattino, *Modern Architecture and the Mediterranean: Vernacular Dialogues and Contested Identities*, 2010); analysing the scale of the village, to research how modernist town planning ideas were modified by the encounter with a rural context (Feniger & Levin, *The Modern Village*, EAHN 2016 conference session), or finally tracking yet another stream of transnational exchange or exportation of expertise, models and ideas. Still, a more holistic understanding of the topic is needed.

To this end, we welcome proposals specifically mapping case studies concerned with large-scale agricultural development and/or colonization schemes conceived and (but not necessarily) implemented in Europe and beyond during modern times (late 18th-20th century), strongly connected to nation- and State-building processes, and to the modernization of the countryside. We are particularly interested in those examples which aimed to “make the difference” in both scale and numbers, entailing radical reshaping of previously uninhabited or sparsely populated areas into new, planned, “total” rural landscapes.

Contributors are explicitly invited to expand their research focus on one or more case studies, and conceptualize the topic's methodological and epistemic implications to the discipline of architectural history, or the potential instrumentality of the historical knowledge produced from such scholarship.
